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SUBJECT: HANOI'S POSITION ON, AND ACTIVITIES REGARDING, THE ISSUE OF U.S. PERSONNEL MISSING-IN-ACTION IN INDOCHINA.

SUMMARY: AS OF EARLY JUNE 1981, NEITHER THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) GOVERNMENT NOR THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY HAD ORDERED A NATIONAL-LEVEL SEARCH IN INDOCHINA FOR U.S. PERSONNEL MISSING-IN-ACTION (MIA) IN THE INDOCHINA WAR ENDING IN 1975. WITHIN THE SRV MINISTRY OF INTERIOR (BNV) NO MENTION WAS EVER MADE OF AN SRV OFFICE TO HANDLE MIA MATTERS. FOR NORTH VIETNAM THE SRV MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE HAS RECORDS OF U.S. AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN IN THE PERIOD 1964-1972. ALTHOUGH HANOI GAINED CONTROL OF SOUTH VIETNAM AND LAOS IN 1975 AND KAMPUCHEA IN 1979, ITS CAPABILITY TO ACCOUNT FOR PRISONERS OF WAR (POW'S) AND MIA'S HAS NOT BEEN SYSTEMATICALLY ORGANIZED. SOME SRV PERSONNEL HAVE COMMENTED ON HANOI'S MANIPULATION OF THE MIA ISSUE AS A BARGAINING CHIP TO SEEK CONCESSIONS FROM THE U.S. GOVERNMENT. IF THE SRV STILL HOLDS U.S. PERSONNEL, THEY COULD POSSIBLY BE LOCATED AT FOUR SITES IN NORTH VIETNAM. END SUMMARY.

1. AS OF EARLY JUNE 1981, NEITHER THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM (SRV) NOR ITS RULING VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY (VNCP) POLITBURO HAD ORDERED ANY NATIONAL-LEVEL SEARCH FOR THE REMAINS OF U.S. MISSING-IN-ACTION (MIA) PERSONNEL IN THE SRV, LAOS OR IN KAMPUCHEA. POLITBURO POLICY ON THE U.S. PRISONER OF WAR (POW)/MIA ISSUE WAS CLASSIFIED AS A STATE SECRET AND WAS NOT PUBLICIZED IN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY STATE AND VNCP AGENCIES OR TO THE VIETNAMESE POPULACE. HANOI APPEARED PROUD OF THE FACT THAT SOME (NUMBER UNKNOWN) U.S. POW'S AND U.S. MIA REMAINS HAD NOT BEEN RETURNED TO THE U.S. THE U.S. POW/MIA ISSUE WAS BEING KEPT ALIVE AS "BARGAINING CHIPS" TO PRESSURE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO CARRY OUT PROVISIONS OF THE 1973 PARIS AGREEMENT.)

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2. AS OF EARLY JUNE 1981, THERE WAS NO ORGANIZED PUBLIC SEARCH FOR THE REMAINS OF U.S. PERSONNEL IN THE SRV, LAOS OR KAMPUCHEA. NO INSTRUCTIONS WERE ISSUED BY THE SRV GOVERNMENT OFFICES, INCLUDING THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR (BO NOI VU-BNV), TO SUBORDINATE ECHELONS TO LOOK FOR U.S. REMAINS. WITHIN BNV CIRCLES, NO MENTION WAS EVER MADE OF AN OFFICE CREATED BY THE SRV TO SEARCH FOR U.S. REMAINS. [REDACTED] IF SUCH AN OFFICE EXISTED, PERSONNEL WOULD BE DRAWN FROM THE BNV, MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AND THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THE OFFICE WOULD HAVE NO FUNCTION TO PERFORM OTHER THAN ACTING AS A "GHOST" FRONT TO PLEASE U.S. REPRESENTATIVES DURING DISCUSSIONS OF THE U.S. MIA ISSUE.)

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3. FOR THE NORTHERN PART OF THE SRV, THE MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE (MND) HAS COMPLETE RECORDS OF ALL U.S. AIRCRAFT SHOT DOWN BY TIME, DATE AND PLACE, AS WELL AS DATA ON CAPTURED AND DEAD AIR CREW MEMBERS BETWEEN 1964 AND 1972. THE BNV KEPT COMPLETE RECORDS ON ALL U.S. POW'S WHO HAD BEEN TRANSFERRED TO PRISON FACILITIES WHICH WERE ADMINISTERED BY THE BNV AND WHERE INTERROGATIONS WERE CONDUCTED. FOR EXAMPLE, THE CENTRAL HOA LO PRISON IN HANOI WAS AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN ADMINISTERED BY THE BNV PRISONS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT (KH-6). THE HOA LO PRISON WAS THE ONLY KNOWN PRISON FACILITY WHICH WAS PHYSICALLY GUARDED BY THE BNV. AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF PRISON FACILITIES FOR U.S. PERSONNEL WERE GUARDED BY MND GENERAL POLITICAL DEPARTMENT MILITARY JUSTICE DEPARTMENT (CUC QUAN PHAP/CQP) PERSONNEL IN JOINT ACTION WITH THE BNV. THE SON TAY PRISON WAS THE ONLY KNOWN FACILITY GUARDED BY THE CQP.

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4. AS FAR AS THE SOUTHERN SRV AND LAOS SINCE 1975 AND KAMPUCHEA SINCE 1979 ARE CONCERNED, HANOI'S CAPABILITY TO ACCOUNT FOR U.S. POW'S AND MIA REMAINS WAS NOT AS SYSTEMATICALLY ORGANIZED AS IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY. NEVERTHELESS, HANOI THROUGH ITS BNV AND THE MND COULD TASK ITS SUBORDINATE COMMANDS IN THE SOUTHERN SRV TO SEARCH FOR U.S. REMAINS IF IT DESIRED. NO ORDER TO DO SO WAS ISSUED THROUGH BNV CHANNELS AS OF EARLY JUNE

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1981. ALTHOUGH THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (LPDR) HAD SOME DEGREE OF AUTONOMY FROM THE SRV, HANOI HAD THE POWER TO DISCLOSE INFORMATION ON U.S. PERSONNEL WHO WERE EITHER CAPTURED ALIVE OR DIED DURING THE INDOCHINA WAR YEARS IN AREAS UNDER PATHET LAO CONTROL. IF THE PATHET LAO HAD CAPTURED U.S. PERSONNEL, HANOI WOULD KNOW OF IT. IN THE CASE OF KAMPUCHEA, SINCE 1979 HANOI COMPLETELY CONTROLS ALL FACETS OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KAMPUCHEA (PRK) GOVERNMENT AND, IF DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA (DK) RECORDS ON AMERICAN PERSONNEL HAD FALLEN INTACT INTO SRV HANDS, HANOI WOULD HAVE THEM.

5. AFTER HANOI'S TAKEOVER OF SOUTH VIETNAM IN APRIL 1975, SEVERAL FOREIGNERS WERE CAPTURED AND/OR ARRESTED IN THE SOUTHERN SRV. KG-3 AUDIO OPERATIONS OFFICE 1 HAD INSTALLED A NUMBER OF AUDIO IMPLANT DEVICES INSIDE THE CHI HOA PRISON IN HO CHI MINH CITY (HCMC) AND IN THE BIEN HOA PRISON. THESE TWO PRISONS WERE ADMINISTERED BY THE BNV PRISONS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT (KH-6). THE BNV FOREIGN COUNTERESPIONAGE DEPARTMENT (KD-3) WAS ALSO INVOLVED IN UNSPECIFIED ACTIVITIES AT BOTH PRISONS.

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6. SOME SRV PERSONNEL HAVE MADE COMMENTS ON HANOI'S POSITION ON THE MIA ISSUE SINCE THE COMMUNIST VICTORY IN 1975. IN MID-1976, SENIOR COLONEL VO VAN ((MANG)), DIRECTOR OF THE SRV BNV TECHNICAL RECONNAISSANCE DEPARTMENT (CUC TRINH SAT KY THUAT/KG-3), CONDUCTED A POLITICAL STUDY SESSION AT THE KG-3B DEPARTMENT OF THE BNV REPRESENTATION FOR SOUTH VIETNAM (RSVN) IN HCMC. DURING THE POLITICAL STUDY SESSION, MANG COMMENTED ON THE STRATEGIC TACTICS (DUONG LOI CHIEN LUOC) OF THE SRV TOWARD THE U.S., WHICH SUPPORTED THE OBJECTIVE OF NORMALIZING RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AND WOULD BREAK THE U.S. "ENCIRCLEMENT" EFFORTS OF THE SRV. THE SRV STRATEGY WAS TO USE THE U.S. MIA ISSUE TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE ECONOMIC AID FOR THE SRV. THE SRV MEANS WERE TO CONDUCT DIALOGUES ON THE U.S. MIA ISSUE WITH PRIVATE U.S. RELIGIOUS, CHARITABLE AND OTHER GROUPS. HANOI HOPED

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THAT THESE GROUPS WOULD GENERATE PRESSURE ON THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AND THAT THESE GROUPS WOULD IN TURN PROVIDE SOME ECONOMIC OR MEDICAL AID TO THE SRV. THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS WAS TO CULTIVATE SYMPATHY FOR THE SRV AND TO DEMONSTRATE THE HUMANENESS OF THE SRV TOWARD THE AMERICAN POPULACE, WHICH WOULD HELP HANOI ACHIEVE ITS GOAL OF ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.

7. OTHER COMMENTS TO THIS EFFECT WERE MADE DURING ANOTHER POLITICAL STUDY SESSION IN MARCH 1979 BY BNV MAJOR NGUYEN HUU ((KHAC)) TO KG-3B PERSONNEL IN HCMC; MAJOR KHAC STATED IN VAGUE BUT UNDERSTANDABLE TERMS THAT "WE HAVE BARGAINING CHIPS IN ORDER TO ASK THEM CARRY OUT THE AGREEMENTS SIGNED IN PARIS."

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